



## **Rear Admiral Richard M. Church, Pharm.D.**

Rear Admiral Richard Church has served as Director, Office of Public Health Support for the Indian Health Service (IHS) since 2004. In this position, he provides national IHS leadership in several critical public health support areas including medical epidemiology and disease prevention; national program statistics; program planning, evaluation, and research; and health professions support. The IHS is the principal agency in the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that provides comprehensive public health services for the American Indian and Alaska Native population across the United States.

A native of Michigan, he received his B.S. and Doctor of Pharmacy degrees from the University of Michigan and completed his residency at the University of Michigan Medical Center. Prior to joining the PHS, he served as Assistant Professor of Clinical Pharmacy and Lecturer in Medicine at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Schools of Pharmacy and Medicine. Over his PHS career, he has served in a variety of clinical and managerial positions at the local, regional, and national program levels. He played an active role in pioneering many progressive pharmacy practice roles that grew out of the Indian Health Service. Very early in his career, he sought roles that put the pharmacist directly in contact with patients to delivery pharmacy services. This included using the patients' medical record rather than a prescription blank which enabled pharmacists to leverage clinical information to provide primary patient care and directly manage the care of patients whose primary mode of treatment was drug therapy. He built upon his grass roots pharmacy practice as he took on other leadership roles that ultimately led to his appointment as Chief Pharmacist for the Indian Health Service and later the Public Health Service. Under the tenure of Surgeon General C. Everett Koop he was appointed as the PHS Chief Pharmacist in 1987. In this role, he provided leadership for the USPHS Pharmacy Category during the centennial and revitalization years of the PHS Commissioned Corps. He sought to elevate the visibility of the PHS Pharmacy programs. To accomplish this, he focused on building professional relationships with professional organizations, universities, national student organizations, and other federal pharmacy services.

Following his role as PHS Chief Pharmacist, RADM Church assumed other leadership roles in the IHS. Early in his career, he developed an active interest in the application of information technology in support of pharmacy practice programs. He maintained and expanded that interest to the broader areas of clinical services and management. He was selected as the Chief Information Officer in 1992. In this role he was active in a variety of national initiatives involving information technology across the IHS and other HHS agencies. He focused on building and modernizing the technology infrastructure to make it capable of supporting a national electronic health record and better serving the health care delivery system.